

TDA-3 Questions and Answers Report (Part 2)

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
49.		The file the IRS has provided for downloading does not contain the Lotus 1-2-3 Spreadsheet for the pricing model. Will the Government please provide the Pricing Model in a separate file for	The Lotus 1-2-3 file entitled "tdaiir3.wk3" (and its accompany formatting file "tdaiir3.fm3") are both available on the TDA-3 webpage. The files are also available on the IRS Electronic Bulletin.
50.	B.1.	In the table, the Government references "SVGA Color Monitors and I/O Interface Card" for RFP Section B.9.5. This paragraph, however, references only the SVGA monitors, while paragraph B.9.7 refers to the requirement for an I/O Interface card. Is the reference on page B-2 a typographical error? Please clarify.	Yes. SVGA Color Monitors should be referenced only. The solicitation will be amended at Section B.1 to correct this error.

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51.	B.9.4.1	<p>The workstations and servers are required to have RAM upgrades offered in minimum 16MB increments and 64MB increments, respectively. Industry standards for motherboards dictate one of two different types of memory modules to configure a system: 1) SIMM, whereby pairs of memory modules have to be added (2 x 8MB = 16MB increment); 2) DIMM, whereby one module may be added at a time. Those motherboards that would use the SIMM modules in pairs, could maybe have six (6) to eight (8) slots for memory, whereas those with DIMM modules usually have four (4) slots for adding memory. With the restriction of the requirement that "originally installed RAM shall not be replaced to add RAM to current configuration," the availability of motherboards that meet these requirements is greatly reduced. With an original configuration of 32MB on the workstation, thereby using two 16MB SIMMs, the maximum amount of RAM upgrades to be added (using 16MB increments, or 2 8MB memory modules at a time) is three (3) upgrades for a total of 80MB on the motherboard. A motherboard capable of using DIMM modules would add the same number of increments and total the same amount of maximum memory without replacing the originally installed RAM (3 16MB modules). This is using the minimum required configurations. Unfortunately, however, the Government has put emphasis on the low cost criteria for award. By changing the size of the RAM upgrade increments, or even the base memory, an offeror would "price out" of the competitive range. Moreover, there is no "best value" credit for exceeding the minimum requirements. By removing the restriction of keeping the originally installed RAM when adding upgrades, then everybody is on a level playing field. Will the Government please consider lifting this restriction?</p>	<p>The solicitation will be amended to eliminate the phrase "Originally installed RAM shall not be replaced."</p>

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
52.	B.9.4.1.	The Government requires that "originally installed RAM upgrades shall not be replaced to add RAM to current configuration." This requirement is extremely restrictive. This offeror respectfully requests that the Government relax this requirement to remove the restriction about not removing the originally installed RAM to add the RAM upgrades. There are a number of limitations set by how an individual motherboard is manufactured. Some motherboards can only be populated with RAM in pairs, while others can be upgraded one module at a time. Depending on how the motherboard can be upgraded and how many memory banks are on the board, varying costs may be incurred. Will the Government relax this requirement?	Refer to the answer to Question 51.
53.	B.9.4.2.a	The requirement for RAM upgrades to be factory installed restricts an integrator who performs significant assembly to meet the letter of the law, and does not appear to be necessary in order to meet the Government's requirement to achieve functional compliance. The requirement forces an integrator to provide systems that may not be the most cost-effective to the Government. Will the Government please delete this requirement?	The requirement shall remain as stated in the solicitation. The term factory installed means that the RAM shall be installed by the provider and not the Treasury end-user.
54.	B.9.5	Can the Government accept a 15" monitor with less than a 14" viewing area? Most 15" monitors have a viewing area of 13.7"-13.9". Keeping the larger viewing area will exclude a number of monitors from consideration.	Refer to the answer to question 54.
55.	B.9.5.	The monitor minimum viewing areas are not consistent with what is available through major manufacturers, for example, a market survey of 7 different manufacturers of 15" monitors, found that the typical viewing area is 13.8" while none manufacture a monitor with a 14" viewing area. I believe a more competitive and complete offer could be achieved by relaxing this requirement to an acceptable range for all three monitor sizes. Is this acceptable to the Government?	The solicitation will be amended at Section B.9.5. for the three monitors to require the following: one monitor shall have a minimum 13.7" diagonal viewing area; one monitor shall have a minimum 15.7" diagonal viewing area; and, one monitor shall have a minimum 19" diagonal viewing area.
56.	B.9.7.4.	The section includes the requirement that the surge and spike protector provide low voltage protection. This seems contradictory to the intended function of a surge and spike protector, which is to prevent damage from electrical surges and spikes. Therefore, this offeror suggests that the Government remove the requirement for low-voltage protection.	The solicitation will be amended at section B.9.7.4. to read, "...low voltage indicator...."

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
57.	E.2.8.6.(c)	Reference: Section E.2.8.6.(c) Tab F - Production, Delivery, and Quality Control Capabilities, Page E-14 Please amend the second sentence to read "... Discussion in this Tab F ...	The solicitation will be amended to change the reference at Section E.2.8.6.(c) from "Tab G" to "Tab F."
58.	B-9.5.	Section B-9.5 specifies a 21" monitor with a minimum 19" viewing area. Will the Government consider a 20" monitor with a 19" viewing area as compliant with this specification?	Refer to the answer to Question 55.
59.	B.12.2	Section B.12.2 states the Customer Technical Assistance (CTA) function shall provide general customer service, and product information support, address pre-delivery, delivery and installation concerns, and warranty service. Does CTA include ongoing "How To support? For instance, "I'm in Microsoft Excel and I do not know how to link spreadsheets. This is more applicable to a help desk function rather than technical assistance. Is this type of support required under CTA?	No. CTA does not include ongoing "How to Support," nor this type of support required under CTA.
60.	B.12.2.	The requirement to provide software support through the respective software OEM/Third Party is not clear. For instance, if Microsoft Word will not load properly, can that call be transferred to Microsoft?	Yes. All calls are controlled by the Contractor. How the calls are processed, including subcontractor support, still remains the responsibility of the Contractor. All help desk call criteria must be adhered to.
61.	B.12.2.	Can the CTA be a team, not just a single point of contact for the Government?	Yes, the CTA can be a team. The solicitation does not specify a single person point of contact.
62.	B.8.1.	Will the Government please describe what it considers to be other sundry office applications? This vendor is concerned that non-commercial and/or locally developed applications, when executed on the offered microprocessor systems, may not meet the same performance and use standards of more rigorously tested and certified commercial applications like those identified in B.7.	The word "sundry" refers to software items such as file maintenance utilities and other commercially available software.
63.	B.8.3; E.2.8.3	B.8.3, Paragraph 1 and E.2.8.3, Paragraph 2 These sections state that Tab C should be a response to Section E.3. It appears that this section should be a response to Section E.4 (FAR Clause 52.212-3). Is this correct?	The correct reference is Section E.4. The solicitation will be amended to refer to the correct paragraph.

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
64.	B.9.	In the last 3 months the computer industry has been moving towards smaller footprint systems. There are several logical reasons for this. The smaller footprint and more integrated motherboards in general have fewer points of failure, and the systems take up less desk or floor space. The requirement for having the capability of additional internal storage devices, i.e. PCMCIA, ZIP Drives and Tape Drives prohibits the use of these low profile cases. Typically these cases will support an internal Hard drive, Floppy Drive, and CD-ROM. It has become common in the industry for companies to purchase PCMCIA, ZIP Drives, and Tape Drives as external devices and share them among several workstations. This is a less expensive proposition in the initial purchase of the product and is far less expensive long term when considering the total cost of ownership. In addition, fewer components in the workstations equal less downtime.	The Government's requirement remains as stated.
65.	B.9.1.1.-b B.9.2.1.-b	Due to the drastically reduced prices of RAM over the past two years, requiring that installed memory may not be replaced may actually be more expensive (higher priced motherboards/DIMMs) to the government, as well as severely limit the motherboards able to compete. This vendor therefore requests deleting the "... without replacing existing RAM on-board" requirement.	Refer to the answer to Question 51.

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
66.	B.9.1.1.g. B.9.2.1.g	<p>This offeror is concerned regarding the number of additional components that would be ordered for the server and the workstation. Recently, many end users have found problems with trying to add more components when there are a limited number of IRQ ports available. This is a problem across the computer industry. All computers have a set standard of sixteen (16) IRQ ports, with at least six (6) ports set and fixed, unable to be moved or shared. This leaves eleven (11) ports that may be configured for use. While certain items may be able to share an IRQ port, the end user must be careful to ensure that the devices will not conflict with each other (e.g., a mouse and a modem would conflict with the modem failing/locking each time the mouse is moved; a mouse and scanner would not conflict because you could use the scanner without using the mouse). Other devices, such as the PCMCIA device, use more than one IRQ port. Often so many devices are put into the system, that only one IRQ port is available for the PCMCIA reader, leaving only one of the PCMCIA slots usable. Below are the IRQ settings for a workstation configured with all of the devices the Government is considering ordering: IRQ 0 = System timer (fixed) IRQ 1 = keyboard (fixed) IRQ 2 = Interrupt Controller (fixed) IRQ 3 = COM2 (modem) IRQ 4 = COM1 (mouse) IRQ 5 = PCMCIA Reader (one slot) IRQ 6 = Floppy Drive (fixed) IRQ 7 = LPT1 (printer) IRQ 8 = Real Time Clock (fixed) IRQ 9 = SCSI controller for tape backup IRQ 10 = Network interface card IRQ 11 = Video Card IRQ 12 = PCMCIA Reader (one slot) IRQ 13 = Numeric Processor IRQ 14 = HDD IRQ 15 = CD ROM</p> <p>This offeror merely wants to make the Government aware of the fact that there are a limited number of IRQ settings available to add devices, and these ports are set by the industry standard. Despite the progress and technological advances made in the computer industry, the number of IRQ settings has never changed. Please keep this in mind when ordering various components for installation into the system.</p>	<p>The information submitted by the vendor is noted by the Government. There is no question posed in this item, so the Government infers that it was presented for informational purpose only.</p>
67.	B.9.10	<p>Request clarification as stated above. Clarification: When will GFP be used versus contractor supplied product? Any idea of qty/frequency of GFP</p>	<p>The GFP is not intended to supercede Contractor-provided items. The GFP have specific applications relative to established user bases.</p>

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
68.	B.9.2.1.d.	The current standard size for cache in servers is 512KB. TDA-3 specifies 256. It will be impossible for some manufacturers to subtract the additional 256KB for price purposes - therefore, they will be penalized for exceeding the specifications. We are kindly requesting that the minimum cache specification be revised from 256KB to 512.	The solicitation will be amended at section B.9.2.1.d. Minimum cache memory requirement per processor for servers is being amended to 512KB Cache.
69.	B.9.2.1.o	What does the Government want to see in "documentation, connection, and installation instructions"?	Please refer to the instructions provided at Section B.8.3 of the solicitation.
70.	B.9.3.1.	Section B.9.3.1 specifies minimum RAM of 24mb for the notebook product. The industry standard for minimum RAM is 32mb on most notebook products and we recommend that the specification be changed to reflect this.	The solicitation (Section B.9.3.1.b.) will be amended to read, "32MB RAM, expandable to a minimum 72MB RAM, on the motherboard;"
71.	B.9.3.1.-b	The requirement specifies minimum RAM of 24MB for the notebook product. Since the industry minimum RAM standard is 32MB on most notebook products, we recommend the specification be changed to reflect minimum 32MB.	Refer to the answer provided at Item 70.
72.	B.9.4.1.-c & d	Please confirm this vendor's interpretation of these requirements as being minimums, and upgrade increments larger than the listed minimums will be	That is correct. The requirements at Sections B.9.4.1.c. & d. are minimums. Upgrade increments larger than the listed minimums will be compliant.
73.	B.9.5	The Offeror shall propose three monitors: one 15" (diagonal) monitor with a minimum 14" viewing area; Of all the complaint monitors available in the industry, the 15" monitor has a maximum viewing area of 13.8", and in most cases the viewable area is actually less than that. Please restate the requirements to state:	Refer to the answer to question 55.
74.	B.9.5.	one 15" (diagonal) monitor with a minimum 13.8" viewing area; Will the Government consider a 20" monitor with a 19" viewing area as compliant with this specification?	Refer to the answer provided at Item 55.
75.	B.9.5.	The majority of 15" and 17" monitors do not have a viewing area of 14" and 16" respectively. Very few 15" monitors have a viewing area of 14" or above, while almost no 17" monitors have a viewing area of 16". In many instances, the manufacturers of those monitors that report a 14" viewing area for a 15" monitor have "rounded up" the viewing area of 13.8" or 13.9" to 14". The same may be said of the 17". In order to increase competition, will the Government relax the requirements to read "one 15" (diagonal) monitor with a minimum 13.6" viewing area" and "one 17" (diagonal) monitor with a minimum 15.6" viewing area"?	Refer to the answer to question 55.

Item	Reference	Question	Answer
76.	B.9.5.	The typical viewable area sizes for commercially available 15" and 17" monitors are 13.7 to 13.8 and 15.7 to 15.8", respectively. Please modify the requirement to allow for the proposal of cost-effective commercially available	Refer to the answer to question 55.
77.	B.9.6.4.e	What is meant by "platters"?	"Platter" is a term for the rewritable CD medium.
78.	B.9.7.2.	The Government requires that the PCMCIA fax/modem feature "audio speaker with software volume control." While this feature is virtually standard on both internal and external fax/modems, it is not a common feature on PCMCIA fax/modems. Will the Government relax this requirement for the PCMCIA fax/modems?	The solicitation will be amended at Section B.9.7.2.d to indicate that external speakers may be used to generate sound.
79.	B.9.7.2.-c	Because of their small size, PCMCIA fax modems typically have one RJ-11 port. Please change this requirement to one RJ-11 connector for the PCMCIA	This requirement remains as stated in the solicitation.
80.	B.9.7.2.-d	Please verify the requirement for a speaker on the PCMCIA Fax/Modem?	Refer to the answer to Question 78.
81.	B.9.7.4.	Is the requirement for low voltage protection an error? We have not been able to locate any surge protector with low voltage protection. There are expensive UPS solutions which also provide surge protection, but they are not called surge and spike protectors.	Refer to the answer to question 56.
82.	B.9.7.5., (2).(b)	The 10Base2 thin coax Ethernet network interface protocol only provides for a data transmission rate of 2 Mbps. Please change the requirement from 10 Mbps to read 2 Mbps.	The solicitation will be amended at Section B.9.7.5.(2)(b). The requirement will be changed to read, "a minimum throughput of 2Mbps..."
83.	B.9.8.3.f,	Is a software solution acceptable for providing PostScript printing?	Yes.
84.	B.9.8.5., (d)	The Government needs to separate the data transmission rate requirements for the 10Base2 and 10BaseT protocols, namely 10 Mbps for 10BaseT and 2 Mbps for	The solicitation will be amended at Section B.9.8.5. to separate the requirements for 10Base2 and 10BaseT data transmission
85.	B.9.9.a	Does "remote" mean within a LAN (workstation to server) or remote shutdown via SNMP?	"Remote" refers to within a LAN.
86.	B.17.1.	This section requires that the Contractor "update the Internet and electronic bulletin board catalogs within five business days of signing the contract..." It also requires the Contractor to include Government-provided information. Need to establish some time parameters for the submission of the Government-provided information. For example, updates including Government-provided information will be completed within XXX days	The solicitation (Section B.17.1) will be amended to read, "The Contractor shall update the Internet and electronic bulletin board catalogs within five (5) business days of signing the contract, receiving subsequent modifications, and Government-provided information."